

WAR DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE SURGEON GENERAL
WASHINGTON

Enroute Washington to Old Point Comfort
(On board S.S. Northland.)

Dear Margaret:

You're a dear Old Sweetheart, and I wish I could be with you while the children are sick, — and always. Your letter came this morning, and I was very sorry to learn that little Gertrude was so unhappy with the measles. I hope you can protect little Ruth, but I presume it is improbable that she will escape. I am glad you are nearer than California, anyway. We can write with less delay, and I could come to Harbor Springs in any emergency.

If Gertrude's temperature was not above 101.8 by rectum, she is probably not having a very severe case. Don't you remember how prostrated Peggy was when she had some infection, probably intestinal, at the time we feared diphtheria? I hope that ~~you~~ Gertrude will be feeling fine by the time this letter arrives.

Dear Margaret! I am glad you wish I were around. It makes me almost sick to think of

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your taking so much of the load of our "partnership," as
over

Mary Ann would call it. I don't think "fulcrumship" expresses it, but I wish I could do more of my share. I hope that you never feel that I am running away from my responsibilities. I hope I am filling them better by the work I am doing, even if it has pulled up our roots and kept us moving over the earth. It has taken us to beautiful places — Chicago and Harbor Springs — beautiful ~~places~~ partly because you were there, and I know my Margaret is a game cat and likes to play the whole game as far as her husband's limitations permit.

I am planning to wire you when I get to a telegraph station in the morning. I want you to know that I care, even if I can't help much.

Measles ~~are~~, according to laboratory experiments and Harold Gray, are infectious about 5 days, possibly 8, after the beginning of the eruption, but I think I would not let the children ^{come in contact with} ~~play with~~ others until they seemed well and had no distinct eruption, ^{that the virus will be that Peggy & Ruth will probably come down after the incubation period is over. The period is about two weeks, or a little more, I believe.}

2.

If the boric acid wash is warmed, I think Gertrude would not fight it so hard. It's the chill of the cold solution that makes it such a shock to her.

Pneumonia, with measles, would probably be an extension ~~and~~ of the cough and cold that goes with measles, but it might be more insidious. A person with pneumonia would breathe very rapidly, cough, and be prostrated. Now don't count her respirations every few minutes and get worried. You know children breathe faster than adults & the respirations run high with fever. Excuse me, sweet Medico, for repeating ~~to~~ facts so well known to you. I wish I were with you so you would not feel quite so much anxiety and responsibility. I hope the Doctor is good, and has your confidence.

I am glad Peg loved the good-night stories. I hope they were silly enough to amuse you and not sufficiently foolish to lower me in your estimation. I live and work largely for your plaudits,
Old Darling.

(over)

I wish I could call back my ~~best~~
brief note of last evening, written when I was
so tired, and sleepy. I had been asked
to grade the officers ~~and~~ ranks below me
in my section, and I knew I would have
to sit up and do it, if it ~~was~~ was to
be finished before my change of station to day.
I had to learn the method first, - ~~one of~~
those wonderful attempts to gain accuracy
by eliminating the thinking process. You
think of ten men one or two grades, ~~at~~
in ranks above the persons in question. Then
you make five separate lists or standards
by selecting for each list five ^{of the} men who
are best, worst, and in between, for each of
the attributes considered, e.g. physical
characteristics, intelligence, etc. Then
you take the name of the person to be
graded and match him up to persons
of equal qualities in the key, and read off
the grade. The five grades are added
for total grade, and the figures are recorded
on a wonderful card containing history, etc.
They now have our listings, pictures, fingerprints, etc.

I think we are quite thoroughly identified, but they want us to wear ^{to} metal tags around our necks, ~~possibly~~, before we go overseas.

Victor had his on when he returned from the bathroom this morning. I suppose he wanted to have his body identified if he was drowned in the tub.

By the way, I have been appointed a member of the "Committee on Health" of the National Conference of Social Workers for a term of two years. Hermann Biggs is Chairman. It will do no harm, and may possibly do some good. It is a big organization, but its health section has been rather inactive.

On Friday I dined at the same table with a colored man. This will have to be kept dark from the Atlanta relatives and the citizens of New York News. Capt. & Mrs. Spingarn invited me to dinner with Mr. Du Bois, editor of the Negro magazine "The Crisis." Mr. Du Bois is a Harvard man with Ph.D. from Germany. He is black but has fine features, not Ethiopian in type. (over)

Mrs. Spingarn said she would help try find a house if desired.

Grace's ~~son~~ sister Mary got her passport all right and I wired her to that effect. I am enclosing a picture for little Gertrude and her Mother.

Blythe is still staying with us. He will take my bed. When he goes home, Meads will move upstairs and ~~take~~ room with Victor. Blythe is trying to sell some photographic apparatus to the gov't and is wiring to bring out the inventors to demonstrate it, so I think he will be here ten days more at least.

I feel as though I were entering on another era of the work. I am moving bag & baggage to Newport News to start more intensive work in a limited area. Everybody is kind enough to talk as though I were being played as a trump card in a very difficult situation. But I am not scared, although I realize fully that the first few weeks of such an assignment, are much less pleasant ~~than~~

very interesting. I am promised backing from so many sources, that I will be kept busy thinking up things to ask for. The army, the shipping board, the Training Camp Commission, & the Red Cross, ^{Public Health Service} all want to help, and I am to be the peace maker & organizer & publisher of results. So here goes!

~~Of course they were a wild few days~~ It was a strenuous matter to clear my desks, break in Meads, pack, and move in the few days between my trip & change of station. But it has been accomplished. I think Meads is happier and begins to see the possibilities in his job.

I take it Gertrude, Sr., will embark on a similar adventurous career in a few days. I took Meads over to introduce him at the Tr. Camp Commission before I left and I found Mrs. Reppin there.

[over]

She said Mrs. Fulmer had wanted to wire Gertrude a few days ago, but had lost her address, ~~so~~ I gave Mrs. Rippen the address at Idylville for wires or letters. I think they want Gertrude & may wire her to hurry up or else wire to keep track of her. If Gertrude has not written at all, I think she should write to Mrs. ~~Rippen~~ ^{Martha} Fulmer, ~~the~~ War Dept Commission on Training Camp Activities, 14th & B. St., Washington, D.C. She may wish to write Mrs. Rippen at the same address, but that is not so important.

Major Snow asked me last evening if I would like to have Gertrude as a secretary & assistant in the Newport News experiment. I did not encourage the idea very much because I thought Gertrude would rather work for someone she didn't know so well. Besides I hope Mrs. Fulmer will ~~be~~ find a better job than helping me.

I wish you were near enough so that you could run down occasionally after, or between, the meals. It would do me a lot of good to have a little encouragement. You have been so inspiring when you have talked to me about my adventures. You are so much wiser and even-tempered than I, — and so kindly to me and my schemes. After you have approved of them, they just have to succeed!

I am so glad that we had a honeymoon together in the transition, between the two pieces of work. All work & no play makes Jack a dull boy. I need recreation, and I seem to depend on you almost entirely for it. Unless you share my pleasures, they are never complete. If you do, the simplest ~~novels~~ becomes grand opera.

So I hope you will look with favor on my new detail, and will

come down on the boat with me
sometime. There was a beautiful
sunset, and soon afterwards there
was a fine big moon. But what
fun was there sitting out without
you? So I came in and wrote
a letter, — this epistle of
unnecessary length.

There will probably be money
forthcoming for office, stenographic
service, automobile, etc, for carrying
on the work. 35,000 dollars will be
available ~~with~~ during one year from
Rockefeller ~~the~~ Foundation in addition
to much greater sums being spent
by various agencies on the ground.
The commission is transferring
the personnel so as to give me
~~to~~ good workers.

So, Dear Love, I am being tried
out again. I know you will love me
whether I succeed or fail, but I think
you will love me more if I succeed.
So I must have success at all costs!

Until you get a definite address from me write me to Col. Chas. Lynch, Surgeon of Port of Embarkation, Newport News, Va.

Prof. Charles Edwin Hyde has received a commission as Captain and has been sent to Fort Cape Charles. He is at Newport News, + so are Major & Mrs. Cummings.

Tell little Gertrude that her Papa loves her and is sorry she is sick. Tell her a story for me.

Good night, Dear Margaret. I am going to go to bed in the "Iron Shelf" and lie here, listening to the lapping of the waves, and thinking of you, until sleep comes, and I dream you are really with me, - and am supremely happy.

Good Night, Dear Love,

Wm.